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ABSTRACT

New Jersey's $1 million Grant Program to Reduce Student Disruption in Schools is intended to provide resources to individual school districts or groups of cooperating districts for developing and implementing programs for chronically disruptive students, and thereby to identify models to make available to other districts throughout the state. Out of 31 applications, six proposals were selected for funding in this 2-year grant program. This document provides program abstracts for each of the six funded proposals: (1) Project ACCENT (Atlantic County Cooperative Education "N" Training); (2) Project ACE (Alternative Center for Education--Rahway); (3) Project EXCEL (Expectation, Commitment, Esteem and Learning--Belvidere, Hackettstown, North Warren Regional, Phillipsburg, and Warren Hills Regional High); (4) Project MAP (Montclair Alternative Program); (5) Project Second Chance (Bayonne); and (6) Project Self-Worth (Middlesex County Vocational and Technical High School). Each abstract lists participating districts, county, project director, grade levels, program site, program strategy, student identification method, and student exit criteria and procedures. (TE)

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NEW JERSEY GRANT PROGRAM TO REDUCE STUDENT DISRUPTION IN SCHOOLS

AWARD RECIPIENTS

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GRANT PROGRAM TO REDUCE STUDENT DISRUPTION IN SCHOOLS

AWARD RECIPIENTS

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Commissioner

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New Jersey State Department of Education
225 West State Street
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Trenton, New Jersey 08625

April, 1986

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COMMISSIONER'S FOREWORD

It is with pleasure that I present to you the award recipients of the Grant Program to Reduce Student Disruption in Schools. The following abstracts of the six proposals which were selected for funding, pending successful negotiations, are clear indications that New Jersey educators are ready to meet the challenge of removing disruptive students from the environment where they interfere with schooling. This challenge also involves providing such students with an opportunity to continue their own education.

The expected outcomes of the six grants will be an improved school environment from which the chronically disruptive students are removed; the provision of effective education and training for the identified students; the identification of model programs for replication across the state; and the establishment of a network for training and sharing information within the state and on a national level, through our efforts with Cities in Schools of Washington, D.C. Cities in Schools is a nationally funded program dedicated to serving dropouts and at-risk youth.

The six pilots represent an array of models including regional and single district which vary according to community setting and resources. However, each contains some of the components that research indicates are critical for the education and training of chronically disruptive students in alternative settings.

The department looks forward to identifying effective models from among these funded programs and making such models available to other districts throughout the state.

Saul Cooperman
Commissioner

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INTRODUCTION

Defining Chronically Disruptive Behavior

Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as a consistent pattern of conduct which is in defiance of school rules and regulations and is manifested over an extended period of time. Students exhibiting chronically disruptive behavior interrupt other students' learning and require increasing amounts of teacher time and attention.

In addition to experiencing difficulty abiding by the rules and regulations of the regular school program, disruptive students have difficulty establishing good relationships with peers and adult authority figures. They commonly exhibit violent behavior in their ongoing discipline problems and frequently experience disciplinary actions and suspensions. These patterns of behavior generally occur in conjunction with poor academic performance.

Purpose of This Program

The purpose of the Grant Program to Reduce Student Disruption in Schools is threefold:

- to provide resources to individual school districts or groups of cooperating districts for the development and implementation of programs for chronically disruptive students;

- to identify effective models from among the funded programs; and

- to make such models available to other districts throughout the state.

The premise underlying the programs funded as a result of this grant program is that it is necessary to remove chronically disruptive students from the environment in which disruption occurs, both for their own benefit and that of other students. Further, it is necessary to provide an alternative structure which is caring and supportive, but within which students are accountable for their behavior. It is recognized that students need to experience success, both in learning and in interpersonal relationships, in order to end the cycle of chronic failure and disruption.

A total of six proposals will be funded in this two-year grant program. These were selected from 31 applications which were reviewed by two panels of educators. The first panel was comprised of program specialists from the Department of Education, while the second consisted of practitioners and educational leaders with experience in alternative education from New Jersey, New York and Washington, D.C.

The $1 million grant program is targeted for chronically disruptive students in grades 7-12. Initial funding will be available for the 1986-87 school year. The amount of each award will be based upon activity expenses included in the yet to be negotiated project activity plan developed jointly by the award recipient and Department of Education staff. Second year funding will be contingent upon the appropriation of state funds and the approval of a non-competitive renewal application submitted by the award recipient.

GRANT PROGRAM TO REDUCE STUDENT DISRUPTION IN SCHOOLS

PROPOSAL ABSTRACTS

OF

AWARD RECIPIENTS

Project ACCENT

Atlantic County Cooperative Education "N" Training

Districts: Atlantic City, Atlantic County Vocational School, Buena Regional, Egg Harbor Township, Greater Egg Harbor Regional, Hammonton, Mainland Regional and Pleasantville

County: Atlantic

Project Director: Ralston Dorrell

I. Grade Levels: 9-12

II. Program Site: Atlantic Community College (ACC)

III. Program Strategy: Project ACCENT is based on the premise that the educational setting impacts behavior. Since chronically disruptive students often experience failure due to constraints in the setting and structure of public high schools, the adult environment of a college campus setting is offered as a more suitable placement. The focus of this county-wide program will be on behavior modification, job skills and graduation requirements, utilizing the academic, vocational and social resources of the college.

- Academic - Each student will have an individualized educational program, to include behavioral as well as academic provisions consistent with his/her interests and abilities.

- Personal Development - In addition to participating in individual, group and family counseling sessions, students will be exposed to various cultural activities such as theatre, music and drama at the college and in the community. The program will also utilize social service agencies in the area to address individual student problems such as substance abuse.

- Vocational/Employment - The program will include assessment, testing and counseling; occupational and career exploration; basic job skills training; labor market information; job seeking skills training; job retention and survival skills training; job search assistance; work experience placements; job site visitations; and remedial training. Atlantic Community College will reserve positions for students to work in its laboratories, library, construction, groundskeeping and maintenance crews, the Academy of Culinary Arts and the Casino Career Institute. Similar positions will be developed for students at off-campus locations, both in the public and private sector. In addition, Atlantic Community College will offer qualifying students the opportunity to participate in unique vocational programs which ACC is pioneering such as microprocessor repair, voice and data transmission, and slot machine repair.

IV. Student Identification: The program will accept students referred by county high schools after screening by program staff.

V. Student Exit: Students will be recommended to return to their home school upon successful completion of both the academic and behavioral components of their individualized educational plan.

Project ACE

Alternative Center for Education

District: Rahway

County: Union

Project Director: William Petrino

I. Grade Levels: 9-12

II. Program Site: Rahway Intermediate School (Wing)

III. Program Strategy: The purpose of the Alternative Center for Education (ACE) is to develop an individualized program to meet the educational, vocational and social needs of the chronically disruptive student through a teacher/advisor model. Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor who will respond to the routine decision making needs of the student and monitor the student's overall progress.

- Academic - Each student will have an individualized educational plan that features integrated instruction in basic skills. Instructional strategies and methods of evaluation will be based on the student's entrance level rather than grade level expectations. The curriculum will include not only the course descriptions and skill arrays formally adopted by the Board of Education, but the "hidden curriculum" defined by the day to day

decisions made by teachers and administrators as they implement the curriculum.

- Personal Development - Counseling, psychological, social work and health services will provide students and their families with a professionally integrated approach to emotional needs. This approach will stimulate greater interest in school and learning. Through cognitively oriented counseling and a peer support network, students will learn how to respond appropriately when classmates exhibit poor judgment or reckless behavior.

- Vocational/Employment - The program will establish a coordinated delivery system of state and local services that will first educate students and parents about community resources and then provide assistance in obtaining services. The life experiences and knowledge of the business community will be integrated into the course curricula. Students will also be assisted in finding volunteer and paid work experiences in the local community.

IV. Student Identification: Recommendations for placement will be reviewed by a screening and selection committee consisting of school administration, staff, parents and community.

V. Student Exit: Goal Attainment Scaling will be the procedure used to determine that the objectives for an individual student have been achieved. As students' goals approximate the expected behaviors of students in the general education program, they will be considered for transition back to the high school.

Project EXCEL

Expectation, Commitment, Esteem and Learning

Districts: Belvidere, Hackettstown, North Warren Regional, Phillipsburg and Warren Hills Regional High

County: Warren

Project Director: Karen S. Holmes

I. Grade Levels: 9-12

II. Program Site: To be determined

III. Program Strategy: The program strategy is based on the premise that in order to assist chronically disruptive students in obtaining an education, a holistic approach is needed that combines interagency cooperation and appropriate resources of the area to address a broad range of difficulties which these students experience. Emphasis will be placed on the development of students' academic, occupational and social skills through a regional, interagency approach.

- Academic - Students will meet requirements for graduation through conventional course credit, program completion alternative (Plan B), independent study, individualized educational plan, proficiency testing or a combination of each. Subjects include science, history, English and mathematics.

- Personal Development - Social skills education will include a variety of activities and community agencies such as wilderness survival training, adolescent group therapy, mental health education, drug and alcohol abuse education and counseling, Warren Hospital Adolescent Pregnancy Program, family court and the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS).

- Vocational/Employment - Students will be given instruction in occupational awareness and pre-employment skills featuring construction/restoration through on-site pre-employment training arranged with the Youth Advocacy Program, Division of Juvenile Services, Department of Corrections. On-site job training will be arranged through the Job Training Partnership Act (J.T.P.A.).

IV. Student Identification: Referrals will be made by parents, students, teachers, administrators or community agency members through designated guidance counselors in each school.

V. Student Exit: Program completion will be determined on an individual basis through on-going monitoring of student progress.

Project MAP

Montclair Alternative Program

District: Montclair

County: Essex

Project Director: Barbara Strobert

I. Grade Levels: 11-12

II. Program Site: Rand School

III. Program Strategy: The program will address varying behavioral, social, and psychological as well as academic and vocational needs of disruptive students through intensive counseling services. The alternative school will be the focal point linking social and business services to the educational system. The program emphasis is to help students lead productive lives by bonding the home, the school, and the community in a unified approach to address the cause of the disruptive behavior. A developmental recreation component for helping students develop self-esteem and social interaction skills is included.

- Academic - A major objective of the instructional program is to prepare students to meet all graduation requirements. Much of the instruction will be individualized utilizing computers, a wide variety of learning materials and student involvement in setting

learning objectives. The mathematics and language arts programs will use mainly diagnostic-prescriptive approaches to access and insure mastery of required skills. An emphasis will be placed on remediating any learning deficiencies that impede the student's academic and personal-social development.

- Personal Development - Experiential learning activities such as field trips, work and community service experiences, and recreational activities are central to the program. The developmental recreation program, using the adventure education personal growth models of programs such as Outward Bound and Project Use, is designed within a framework of self-concept theory. The premise behind these activities is that a well planned physical education program focused on cooperative games and adventure activities will help moderate disruptive behavior, improve school performance, and increase positive social interaction. A family based intervention strategy will also be employed to effect positive change in the student. An attempt to influence the parental value systems away from apathy and toward strong support for education will be the focus. The counselor will also assist families in crises such as unemployment, divorce or violence by making appropriate agency contacts for assistance.

- Vocational/Employment - The vocational component will focus on providing a transition from school to work by integrating academic and vocational training. Counselors and teachers will work with students in areas such as career exploration, interview

techniques, test taking strategies, completing employment forms, appropriate dress and socialization skills. Many of these preparatory activities will be incorporated within the regular counseling and instructional programs. A student may be assigned to a community service project, be involved in apprenticeship training, or be placed in an actual job.

IV. Student Identification: Students will be referred to the program by the principal, assistant principal, counselor, prevention specialist, parent, student or teacher.

V. Student Exit: Students will exit the program upon successful performance in three basic areas: (1) attendance, (2) academic work, and (3) ability to handle rules and regulations.

Project Second Chance

District: Bayonne

County: Hudson

Project Director: Lois McGuire

I. Grade Levels: 7-12

II. Program Site: Bayonne High School, 3rd floor wing

III. Program Strategy: Project Second Chance is designed around a three component strategy which includes guidance and counseling, basic skills instruction and employment skills training. The program will expand the presently operating Alternative Education Program to serve more students and to provide guidance and counseling components for individual, group and family counseling.

- Academic - Individual prescription plans (IPP) will be developed for each student with emphasis on improving reading, writing and mathematics skills. Other features include a basic skills lab, HSPT Summer Work/Study Program and peer tutoring.

- Personal Development - Includes individual, group and family counseling; crisis intervention; a "Drop-In" Center; a "Hot Line" telephone system; parent support groups; and community/school

linkages such as Al-Anon/Alateen, Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation and Bayonne Community Mental Health Center.

- Vocational/Employment - Instruction in the employment skills component will feature an individualized vocational plan complete with interest inventories, employment orientation course, an "Introduction to the World of Work" course, a consumer living course, a child rearing course, coordination with the vocational and business departments, coordinated school/employment, job placement and use of positive community role models.

IV. Student Identification: Recommendations for placement will be made by the principal, child study team, guidance counselor, classroom teacher, parent or medical department.

V. Student Exit: Students will be mainstreamed into the regular classroom upon demonstrating successful academic and behavioral progress.

Project Self-Worth

District: Middlesex County Vocational and Technical High School

County: Middlesex

Project Director: Joseph C. Colombo

I. Grade Levels: 9-12

II. Program Site: Piscataway Vocational School

III. Program Strategy: The program is based on the philosophy that one means of ameliorating chronic disruptive behavior is to increase the self-esteem and concept of self-worth of the individual who is manifesting negative behavior. Self-esteem will be developed through projects serving the blind and the elderly.

- Academic - The academic component is based on individual academic skill development accomplished through a competency based curriculum using computers to allow the student to experience immediate reward for making positive responses.

- Personal Development - Individualized behavior modification contracts will be used to give students the feedback necessary for the development of positive self-concept. A full-time psychiatric

social worker will visit the home, provide individual and group counseling of students and parents, and act as a crisis intervention counselor and facilitator. School nurses will monitor the physical and nutritional health of the students. All students in the program will be given a free breakfast and lunch which will be coordinated through the school nurse. Parental and family involvement will be devoted to assisting parents in coping with their teenage children and serve as a means of keeping parents informed of the status and progress of their child.

- Vocational/Employment - The purpose of the shop component is to provide a vehicle through which the students can demonstrate and utilize the vocational talents they have acquired through training to develop feelings of self-worth and high-esteem by providing elderly people with assistance in maintaining their dwellings. Students will go into the homes of these individuals and provide the service and/or repair that is required. The shop area will be devoted to providing direct assistance, via projects for the blind and for the elderly. Working with the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, the students will print braille textbooks for blind students attending public schools in New Jersey as well as in other states.

IV. Student Identification: Recommendations for placement will be made to the principal through the vice-principal in charge of discipline who will then involve teaching staff, the parents and the student in the decision process.

V. Student Exit: A review will be conducted to evaluate progress of each student assigned to the alternate education program in three basic areas: (a) attendance, (b) academic work, and (c) ability to handle rules and regulations. A specific number of credits will be necessary before reinstatement into the mainstream is recommended.

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